

## **Uinta Basin, Utah high wintertime ozone**

### Issue Summary:

The EPA has a trust responsibility to protect public health and the environment in Indian country. One area in Indian country of concern is the Uintah and Ouray Reservation in Utah's Uinta Basin, which continues to have poor air quality due to wintertime ozone and most recently experienced 10 consecutive days of unhealthy ozone air quality. The Uinta Basin has significant existing oil and natural gas development.

### Current Status:

- The EPA is working with the Ute tribal government, the state of Utah, the Bureau of Land Management and affected industries, to determine how to best protect public health while providing for continued growth in the oil and natural gas sector in the region, which is vital to the Tribe's economic interests.
- The EPA and Utah have been working together to address emissions from existing and new oil and natural gas sources. The EPA has been considering potential Clean Air Act rulemaking activities related to control of existing oil and natural gas sources and the permitting of new oil and natural gas sources in the Uinta Basin's Indian country.
- Additionally, the EPA reviews the Bureau of Land Management's environmental impact statements for oil and natural gas projects on federal lands as part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process.
- The goal of these efforts is to protect the public health, the environment, and cultural resources in the Uinta Basin, while also facilitating development of this important national energy resource.
- Moving forward the EPA intends to ensure that oil and natural gas producers in Indian country have a "level playing field" regarding requirements between state and EPA jurisdictions.

### Background:

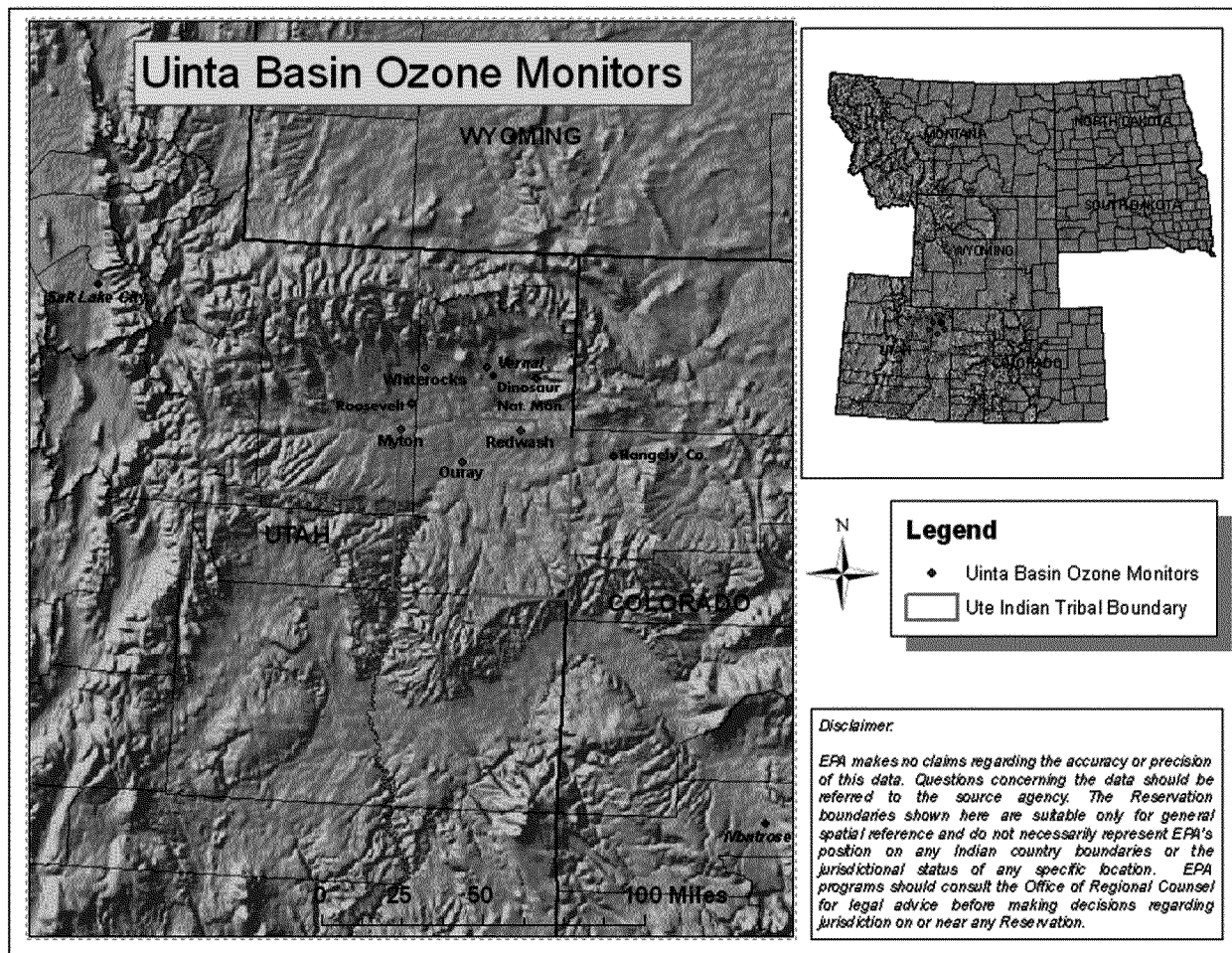
- High ozone levels have been observed over the last few years at numerous air monitors (tribal and state) in the Uinta Basin during winter inversions - reaching concentrations as high as 134 parts per billion in 2013.
- The majority of ozone-forming pollutants -- volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen oxides (NOx) -- released in the Uinta Basin, come from oil and gas sources.
- An estimated 75% of oil and natural gas sources in the Uinta Basin are on the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation, where the EPA is the regulatory authority under the Clean Air Act. The remaining sources are located on state land and are subject to Utah's Division of Air Quality requirements.
- The most recent Uinta Basin ozone episode began January 29, 2017 and continued through February 7, 2017 with ozone exceedances every day at several monitors ranging from 71 to 105 ppb.

Links to Maps and Research:

2014 Uinta Basin Winter Ozone Study (Utah Division of Air Quality):

[http://www.deq.utah.gov/locations/Uintahbasin/ozone/docs/2015/02Feb/UBWOS\\_2014\\_Final.pdf](http://www.deq.utah.gov/locations/Uintahbasin/ozone/docs/2015/02Feb/UBWOS_2014_Final.pdf)

Uinta Basin Map:



Region 8 Contact: Monica Morales, Acting Director, Air Program, (303) 312-6936

Headquarters Contact: Mike Koerber, Deputy Office Director, OAQPS, (919) 541-5557